(a) whether the University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked all the universities and colleges in the country to have an internal assurance cell, to improve the quality of higher education being imparted;

(b) if so, whether all the Central Universities and colleges are monitored by the UGC, in so far as imparting of higher education is concerned;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what other steps Government proposes to take to improve standard of education in colleges and universities, in consultation with the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) All Universities and Colleges accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council are required to establish an Internal Quality Assurance Cell. An amount of Rs. 5.00 lakh has been indicated to each of the eligible Central Universities for the purpose of setting up of these Cells.

(d) Improvement of quality of higher education is a continuous process. A substantial increase in Plan allocation has been made in the Eleventh Plan for the expansion of higher education, for setting up of institutions such as Central Universities in uncovered States, establishment of National Universities aiming for world class standard, Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management, Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research, Indian Institutes of Information Technology and Schools for Planning and Architecture. Expansion of capacity of the existing institutions, incentivising State Governments for increasing State outlays on higher education, strengthening of science based research in Universities, regular updating of curricula, introduction of semester system etc., Faculty Improvement Programmes and other reforms have been/are being taken up during the Eleventh Plan for improving the quality and relevance of higher education. It has also been decided to make National Eligibility Test (NET) compulsory for appointment as teachers, except for those who have obtained Ph.D. degrees in the relevant disciplines from universities following the norms for enrolment, course work and evaluation as may be prescribed by the UGC and for those subjects for which NET is not available. A decision has been taken to improve pay, other emoluments and service conditions of teachers in higher education in order to attract talented persons to teaching careers. It has also been decided to create posts of Professors in Under Graduate Colleges in order to improve quality of collegiate teaching.

Appointment of judges to Supreme Court

*297. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court's panel, responsible for appointments and promotions of judges to the Supreme Court, has rejected Government's objections to its latest round of recommendations for promotions;

(b) the reasons for Government's refusal and asking the Chief Justice of India to reconsider the names for elevation; and

(c) whether it has escalated the conflict between Judiciary and the Parliament, and if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) The Judges of the High Courts and Supreme Court are appointed according to the procedure laid down in Articles 217 and 124 respectively of the Constitution of India. In the case of Advocates-on-Record *vs.* Union of India, the Supreme Court interpreted the procedure laid down that the consultation with the Chief

Justice of India means the consultation with the collegium of the Judges which makes recommendation for the appointment. According to this interpretation of the Constitution, if the Government feels that the recommendation needs to be reconsidered, then it may be referred back to the Chief Justice of India for reconsideration. However, if the collegium reiterates the recommendation, then the proposal has to be referred to the President for approval. The same procedure has been followed in the latest appointments to the Supreme Court. There is no conflict between the Government and the judiciary. However, there have been demands from certain quarters for reconsideration of the law laid down in the Advocates-on-Records *vs.* Union of India.

Rural electrification

†*298. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rural area villages are covered under the electrification programme for the revenue village;

(b) if so, whether under the revenue village, all the villages coming within a 20 km radius are being electrified;

(c) if so, the details in this regard pertaining to Jharkhand;

(d) whether Government is aware that contractors are covering villages coming only within a 5 km radius for electrification under the revenue village; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) envisages electrification of about 1,15,000 un-electrified census revenue villages besides intensive electrification of already electrified census revenue villages.

(b) All the census revenue villages including hamlets with population over 100 are eligible for electrification under RGGVY irrespective of the areas and radii of the census revenue villages.

(c) As regards RGGVY in Jharkhand, all the 22 projects covering electrification of 16965 un-electrified villages, re-electrification of 2772 de-electrified villages and intensvie electrification of 7622 already electrified villages for providing over 29.26 lakh rural household connections including over 16.92 lakh Below Poverty Line (BPL) connections have since been sanctioned. Project-wise details are at Statement-I (*See* below).

Implementation Agencies have reported that rural electrification works in 3221 un-electrified villages and 1584 electrified villages have been carried out in the State of Jharkhand as on 01.12.2008 besides release of 97703 BPL household connections. The State has availed an amount of Rs. 1248.87 crore under RGGVY as on 01.12.2008. Project-wise physical and financial progress of RGGVY works in Jharkhand are at Statement-II (*See* below).

(d) RGGVY has not envisaged any conditionally with respect to area or radius of villages for electrification.

(e) So far no such case has been reported to Rural Electrification Corporation, the nodal agency of RGGVY.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.